Chapter 1: Introduction

Background

The Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) supports the conservation and recovery of Pacific salmon across the rivers, watersheds, and coastal areas they inhabit in Washington, Oregon, California, Alaska, and Idaho. PCSRF was established by Congress in Public Law 106-113 in response to the listings of Pacific salmon and steelhead populations under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in the 1990s, as well as the impacts of the 1999 Pacific Salmon Treaty Agreement. Since fiscal year (FY) 2000, PCSRF has been used by state, local, and tribal entities to restore and protect salmon habitat; conduct watershed assessments; develop local plans for restoration efforts and management; enhance salmon populations; educate constituencies; and conduct research to monitor, evaluate, and support salmon conservation and recovery.

PCSRF supplements and complements existing federal, state, and tribal programs to conserve and restore Pacific salmon and steelhead. By working in conjunction with these programs, PCSRF leverages the capabilities, expertise, and information of multiple entities, while improving the effectiveness of salmon recovery efforts overall. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) oversees the administration of PCSRF and distributes the congressional appropriations to states and tribes in the Pacific Coast region. Congressional appropriations for FY 2000–2005 are shown in Exhibit 1-1.[1] Idaho was added to the PCSRF program in FY 2004.

Salmon Conservation and Recovery

Pacific salmon and steelhead (referred to generically in this report as "salmon") are anadromous fish that spawn and rear in freshwater but spend much of their adult life in the ocean (see the salmon life cycle diagram on the inside front cover of this report). Their habitat ranges

[1] Authorization for appropriations through FY 2003 was provided in the FY 2001 Appropriations Act (P.L. 106-553). Congress authorized the FY 2004 appropriation in P.L. 108-199 and the FY 2005 appropriation in P.L. 108-447. The amounts in Exhibit 1-1 are net of recessions and other reductions.

Exhibit 1-1: Congressional Appropriation of PCSRF Funds (in millions)

	FY 2000	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005
Washington	$18.0	$30.2	$34.0	$27.8	$26.0	$24.6
Alaska	$14.0	$19.5	$27.0	$21.9	$20.6	$23.2*
California	$9.0	$15.1	$17.0	$13.9	$13.0	$12.8
Oregon	$9.0	$15.1	$17.0	$13.9	$13.0	$12.8
Idaho	•	•	•	•	$4.9	$4.4
Pacific Coastal Tribes	$6.0	$7.4	$11.0	$8.9	$8.4	$7.9
Columbia River Tribes	$2.0	$2.5	$4.0	$3.0	$3.1	$2.5
Total	$58.0	$89.8	$110.0	$89.4	$89.0	$88.2*

* Does not include $500,000 (pre-recession) that Congress transferred to a fishing capacity reduction program for the Southeast Alaska purse seine fishery.

from the inland watersheds draining into the Pacific Coastal region's rivers and streams, through coastal estuaries, to the Pacific Ocean. Because salmon return to spawn in their birth stream, species have evolved over time based on geography and other factors into genetically distinct populations called evolutionarily significant units (ESUs). There are 52 salmon ESUs on the Pacific Coast (not including Alaska), of which 26 ESUs are currently listed as threatened or endangered under the ESA. A map showing the ESU designations can be found on the inside back cover of this report.

Many factors—both human-caused and natural—have contributed to the decline of salmon over the past century. Salmon habitat has been altered through activities such as urban development, logging, grazing, power generation, and agriculture. These habitat alterations have resulted in the loss of important spawning and rearing habitat. Past harvest and hatchery practices and other factors also affected salmon abundance and left populations more susceptible to fluctuations in the natural environment, such as changing ocean conditions, droughts, fires, and floods. Many of these activities and conditions continue to threaten salmon and their habitat, even as programs such as PCSRF seek to restore endangered and threatened salmon ESUs and prevent other salmon from becoming threatened with extinction.

Recovery of sustainable salmon populations requires an ongoing commitment over many salmon life cycles. The actual benefits of restoration efforts can take years to realize due to the significant time lag from investment to physical habitat changes and biological response. This time lag makes it all the more important to ensure that investments in salmon conservation and recovery are used to address the highest priority needs and that the effectiveness of recovery actions is monitored and evaluated over time. Accordingly, PCSRF supports watershed assessments and other planning efforts to identify and address the key factors that limit salmon recovery (called "limiting factors") for different ESUs and to identify and prioritize recovery actions based on those factors. Other PCSRF projects monitor the health and status of watersheds and salmon stocks, providing information needed to evaluate whether habitat restoration projects and other recovery actions are appropriate and effective.

PCSRF Performance Goals and Measures

The strategic goal of PCSRF is to contribute to the conservation, restoration, and sustainability of Pacific salmon populations and their habitats. This goal will be accomplished by maintaining or increasing salmon habitat, developing plans and assessments on recovery and conservation needs, enhancing salmon stocks where appropriate, monitoring and evaluating recovery efforts, educating constituencies, and conducting research on salmon populations and factors affecting productivity.

NMFS has worked with its state and tribal partners to establish a set of performance goals and measures to more effectively evaluate and report on progress toward

Exhibit 1-2: Performance Goals and Measures for PCSRF

Measure Type	Performance Goal	Performance Measure
Outcome	Increase naturally spawning Pacific salmon populations to levels that are sustainable and allow for annual harvest	» Increase the number of populations of ESA-listed Pacific salmon ESUs with stable or increasing trends by 10 percent per year
Output	Enhance the availability of habitat to support sustainable Pacific salmon populations	» Increase amount of spawning and rearing habitat (includes adjacent upland, wetland, estuarine, riparian, and instream habitat) by 50,000 acres per year » Increase the amount of accessible habitat by 100 miles per year
Output	Improve knowledge and management practices to sustain salmon populations	» Increase the number of assessments that address viability and factors limiting recovery by 10 per year » Increase number of watersheds where effectiveness, validation, and/or status monitoring is occurring by 10 per year » Improve harvest and hatchery strategies for sustainable fisheries

achieving the PCSRF strategic goal (see Exhibit 1-2). Performance goals are statements about the desired outcomes (end results) and outputs (activities undertaken to achieve the end results) of the program. Specific measures are identified, for which indicators will demonstrate progress in achieving these goals. The performance goals allow NMFS, states, and tribes to quantitatively or qualitatively assess the accomplishments of PCSRF and measure overall progress toward the PCSRF strategic goal, in addition to tracking salmon recovery investments (inputs) based on expenditures or numbers of projects. The PCSRF performance goals will be refined over time to include more specific targets and timelines for completion at the recovery domain or ESU level.

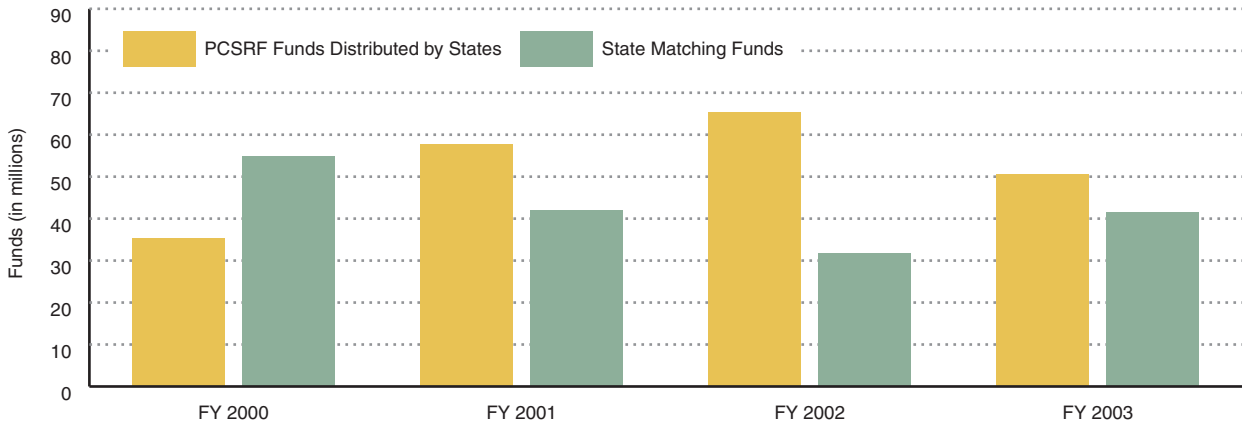
Distribution of Funding for Salmon Conservation and Recovery

NMFS administers the PCSRF program and shares implementation with the states and tribes in the Pacific Coast region. Congressionally-appropriated PCSRF funds are distributed by NMFS to the states and tribes, who subsequently distribute them to various partners to carry out activities addressing the PCSRF goals. Final recipients of PCSRF and matching state funds include state, local, and tribal governments; private landowners; conservation districts; local watershed groups; and other recovery-focused organizations. To govern the distribution of funds to individual projects, NMFS has established memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with the states of Washington, Oregon, California, Alaska, and Idaho as well as three tribal commissions on behalf of 28 tribes.[2] These MOUs establish criteria and processes for funding priority projects.

Under the general guidelines of the MOUs, the states and tribal commissions distribute PCSRF funds to support individual salmon conservation and recovery projects implemented by public and private entities across the region. Washington, Oregon, California, and Idaho provide funds to match the PCSRF distributions through their grant distribution processes. (Tribes are not required to provide matching funds.) The PCSRF and state matching funds are, in turn, also supplemented by private and local contributions made at the project level, including additional resources, volunteer time, and other in-kind donations. Less quantifiable, but equally important, are the increased levels of local support for salmon conservation and recovery actions that occur as a result of the implementation of collaborative PCSRF projects. Exhibit 1-3 shows PCSRF and state matching funds for salmon recovery (not including local and sponsor match) by fiscal year.

[2] The Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC) on behalf of 20 western Washington treaty tribes, the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC) on behalf of four Columbia River basin treaty tribes, and the Klamath River Inter-Tribal Fish and Water Commission (KRITFWC) on behalf of four Klamath River basin tribes.

Exhibit 1-3: PCSRF and State Matching Funds for Salmon Recovery in Washington, Oregon, and California, FY 2000–2003



PCSRF funds are awarded to the states and tribes as appropriations become available, which normally occurs well after the October 1 start of the federal fiscal year. States and tribes must submit grant applications to NMFS each year, and those grant awards are followed by state and tribal processes for screening and selecting priority projects and distributing the funds (see Chapter 4). The states of Washington, Oregon, California, and Idaho each conduct a competitive grant process, which normally takes 4 to 12 months to complete. Because of these separate, sequential grant distribution processes, many of the PCSRF funds are committed to projects in the year following the availability of appropriations. Actual project completion can take several additional years because of permitting delays, processes required to issue contracts for the work to be done, construction windows, and the seasonal nature of salmon work. Monitoring and evaluating the outcomes and effectiveness of the project in terms of improved habitat and returning salmon requires many additional years due to salmonid life cycles and other ecological factors.

The state and tribal processes for allocating PCSRF and state matching funds are designed to complement existing state and tribal government processes and agency infrastructure. These processes include rigorous reviews of the scientific and technical merit of proposals, public and stakeholder input, and mechanisms to ensure selected projects include measures to provide for performance reporting and accountability in the use of public funds. Starting with the FY 2003 funding cycle, NMFS has required PCSRF grantees to report information on the results of projects (outputs and outcomes) into a common database using a consistent set of performance indicators (see http://webapps.nwfsc.noaa.gov/pcsrf). This process has improved the ability of NMFS, states, and tribes to show how PCSRF is making significant progress toward the conservation and recovery of Pacific salmon.

Report Organization

The remainder of this report is organized into four chapters. Chapter 2 presents the most current information available about the status and recovery needs of ESA-listed salmon populations in Washington, Oregon, California, and Idaho, and highlights PCSRF and other recovery accomplishments in each of the recovery domains. Chapter 3 summarizes the progress PCSRF projects have made in achieving the performance goals for salmon conservation and recovery region-wide. Chapter 4 describes the program's accomplishments at the state and tribal level. Finally, Chapter 5 offers concluding remarks about PCSRF contributions to salmon conservation and recovery.